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PA/HO, Department of State

E.O. 12958, as amended

June 9, 2005

POL 15-1 PAK

XR POL INDIA-PAK

Department of State

TELEGRAM



~~SECRET~~

865

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ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 /026 W

048666

R 251050Z FEB 72
FM AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3259
INFO AMCONSUL DACCA
AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI
AMCONSUL KARACHI
AMCONSUL LAHORE

~~SECRET~~ ISLAMABAD 1833

EXDIS

SUBJ: CONVERSATION WITH PRES BHUTTO: PEACE PROSPECTS

REF: ISLAMABAD 1676 (NOTAL) AND 1823 *for 15-1 PAK*

1. SUMMARY: BHUTTO IS SEARCHING FOR SOME WAY TO PURSUE PATH OF PEACEFUL SETTLEMENT WITH INDIA. HE IS WILLING TO GO TO NEW DELHI FOR TALKS WITH PRIMIN GANDHI AFTER INDIAN TROOPS HAVE LEFT BANGLADESH. HIS INITIAL OBJECTIVE WOULD BE TO DETERMINE WHETHER GOI IS COMMITTED TO A PEACEFUL SETTLEMENT ON TERMS THAT WOULD BE ACCEPTABLE TO PAKISTAN. IF FINDING IS POSITIVE, SPECIFIC DETAILS OF SETTLEMENT COULD THEN BE WORKED OUT. END SUMMARY.

2. RECENT GOI OFFER TO MEET WITH GOP QTE WITHOUT PRE-CONDITIONS UNQTE TO DISCUSS OUTSTANDING PROBLEMS CAME UP DURING MY DINNER MEETING WITH BHUTTO FEB 24. HE SAID HE THOUGHT GOI HAD TIMED OFFER TO COINCIDE WITH OPENING OF US/CHINESE TALKS IN REKING. HE WOULD NOT REPLY TO IT UNTIL AFTER PRES NIXON LEFT CHINA. ALTHOUGH HE DID NOT SEEM TO HAVE MADE UP HIS MIND JUST HOW TO REACT TO GOI OFFER, BHUTTO GAVE IMPRESSION HE WISHED TO GO ALONG IN SOME POSITIVE WAY. HE SAID HE WOULD LIKE TO EXPLORE THE NATURE AND DEPTH OF GOI COMMITMENT TO A PEACEFUL SETTLEMENT THAT WOULD BE ACCEPTABLE TO PAKISTAN. HE THOUGHT THIS COULD BEST BE DONE BY HIS HAVING PERSONAL MEETING WITH PRIMIN GANDHI.

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AND HE WAS WILLING TO GO TO NEW DELHI FOR THAT PROPOSE. HE SAW DIFFICULTIES IN MAKING SUCH VISIT TO DELHI PRIOR TO EVACUATION FROM BANGLADESH OF REMAINING INDIAN TROOPS, WHICH NOW SET FOR MARCH 17. (HE REITERATED EARLIER STATEMENT TO ME THAT HE REMAINED READY TO MEET WITH MUJIB AT ANY TIME IF SUCH MEETING COULD BE HELD WITHOUT PRECONDITIONS, I.E. PRIOR GOI RECOGNITION OF BANGLADESH.) BHUTTO SAID HE DID NOT ENVISAGE HIS FIRST MEETING WITH MRS. GANDHI AS GOING INTO DETAILS OF A SETTLEMENT. IF HE DETERMINED THAT INDIAN CONCEPT OF PEACE AND HIS OWN WERE COMPATIBLE, DETAILS MIGHT BETTER BE WORKED OUT IN SUBSEQUENT MEETINGS.

3. I NOTED THAT GOI HAD BEEN SAYING TO US THAT IT WANTED TO ARRIVE AT A DURABLE PEACE WITH PAKISTAN THAT WOULD ALLOW BOTH COUNTRIES TO DEVOTE THEMSELVES INCREASINGLY TO THEIR IMPORTANT PROGRAMS OF DOMESTIC UPLIFT. I SAID I ASSUMED THIS WAS ALSO THE GOAL OF PAKISTAN, AND WE HOPED IT WOULD BE ACHIEVED. BHUTTO SAID IT WAS NECESSARY TO HAVE PEACE, AND HE RECALLED HIS EMOTIONAL STATEMENT TO ME LAST SUMMER THAT HE NO LONGER CONSIDERED CONFRONTATION WITH INDIA TO BE A VALID POLICY. HE HOPED GOI WOULD RECOGNIZE MANY PROBLEMS HE FACES AS HE SEEKS TO MOVE TOWARD DURABLE PEACE. ACKNOWLEDGING THAT GOI MAY SEEK BOTH RECTIFICATIONS AND INTERNATIONALIZATION OF CEASEFIRE LINE IN KASHMIR, HE SAID THESE WILL PRESENT DIFFICULTIES FOR HIM. HE WAS, HOWEVER, READY TO TALK WITH INDIA REGARDING A QTE LINE OF PEACE UNQTE WHICH MIGHT, IN DUE TIME, LEAD TO A RESOLUTION OF THE LONG-STANDING KASHMIR PROBLEM. HE ENVISAGED THAT ACCEPTANCE OF SUCH A QTE LINE OF PEACE UNQTE COULD BE FOLLOWED, FOR EXAMPLE, WITHIN FAIRLY SHORT ORDER BY THE REESTABLISHMENT OF SOME TRADE AND TRAVEL LINKS WITH INDIA. HE REFERRED, MEANWHILE, TO THE RETURN OF PAK POWS AS MATTER OF HIGH PRIORITY.

4. I ALLUDED, AT THAT POINT TO BHUTTO'S LATEST MESSAGE TO PRES NIXON WHICH I NOTED HAD NOT INCLUDED ANY REFERENCE TO BHUTTO'S DESIRE FOR PEACEFUL COEXISTENCE WITH INDIA SUCH AS HE HAD EXPRESSED IN HIS MEETINGS IN WASHINGTON LAST DECEMBER. BHUTTO REMARKED THAT MY CONCERN ON THIS POINT HAD BEEN BROUGHT TO HIS ATTENTION. HE WANTED TO ASSURE ME THAT THERE WAS NO CHANGE IN HIS COMMITMENT TO SEEK A

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PEACEFUL SETTLEMENT WITH INDIA. HE HAD SENT A SIMILAR
MESSAGE TO CHINESE LEADERS PRIOR TO PRES NIXON'S ARRIVAL.
HE WOULD NOT HAVE WANTED TO SEND ONE KIND OF MESSAGE TO
CHINESE AND ANOTHER TO PRES NIXON. CONCERNS HE HAD EXPRESSED
IN MESSAGE WERE REAL, BUT SO WAS HIS DESIRE FOR PEACE.
SOBER

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